Income Maintenance Advisory Committee
Division of Economic Support
M I N U T E S
Thursday January 17, 2002
1:00 – 3:30 p.m.

GEF III
Room 041
Madison, WI

County Attendees: **Jackie Bennett,** Racine Co. WDC, **Lynn Brenner,** Calumet Co. DHS, **Jill Erickson,** Milwaukee Co. DHS, **Joanne Faber,** Washington Co. DSS, **Jane Huebsch,** Marathon Co. DSS, **Ed Kamin, Tri-Chair,** Kenosha Co. JC, **Robert Macaux,** Florence Co. DHS, **John Rathman,** Outagamie Co., **Shirley Ross,** LaCrosse Co. HSD, **Sue Schmitz,** Waukesha Co., **SaraShackleton,** Dane Co. DHS, **Sheryl Siegl**, Winnebago Co. DHS

State Attendees: **Barb Berlin,** Madison Regional AA, **Chuck Billings,** DWD/DWS/Fraud, **Becky Craig**, DWD/ASD/Project Lead, **Dave Edie,** DWD/DWS/Child Care, **John Haine,** DHFS/DHCF/BHCE, **Tim Hineline,** DWD/DWS/ BWC, **Kevin Huggins,** DWD/DWS/BPS, **Jim Jones,** DHFS/DHCF/BHCE, **Jill Jokela,** DWD/ASD/BITS, **Gerry Mayhew**, DWD/DWS/Training, **Cheryl McIlquham,** DHFS/DHCF/BHCE, **Marilyn Rudd,** DWD/DWS/ONSPI, **Alan Sweet,** DWD/DWS/Child Care, and **Rick Zynda, Tri-Chair**, ONSPI.

General Administrative Announcements

Ed Kamin suggested approval of the December 2001 minutes be held until the February IMAC meeting, appropriate staff have not had an opportunity to review them for comments or edits.

(***Note:*** *Minutes are available on-line on the Internet Partner Page –* http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dws/w2/imac/minutes/2001/default.htm.

Minutes for 2002 will be accessed on the Internet Partner Page – http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dws/w2/imac/minutes/2002/default.htm.

Administrative Items -

Rick Zynda presented updates on the Farm Bill, it still had not been passed. Through a news release President Bush indicated his concern that the Farm Bill needed to be addressed. So, we have to wait to see what happens.

Both Rick and Ed pointed out a trend for seasonal variations in food stamp caseloads. Ed has found September is the busiest month in Kenosha County. Rick said ONSPI has found February/September were the two months we traditionally found spiked.

The balance of the State almost hit the national average for error, but the overall figure indicated everyone's error rate rose in September.

We have not submitted a final report to USDA-FNS, they will do the final adjustments.

ONSPI is working on making the Food Stamp Error Data available on the ONSPI web site. Ed Kamin inquired if the data can be downloaded and manipulated for Agency related trends, etc. The web page data will be accessed through Adobe Acrobat files but you are not able manipulate the data unless you re-enter it into Excel or some other program.

This differs from data warehouse. The food stamp data warehouse, which gets dates from CARES. Data warehouse reports allow an agency to save the data directly to an excel spreadsheet which then allows further manipulation.

Cheryl McIllquham shared information from a recent Legislative Fiscal Bureau document, this information was also referred to in the media. It projected the State's Budget shortfall at 1.1 billion, versus the earlier projection of $1.3 billion. The Document also contained a National forecast on the length of the current recession. It predicted a bottoming out in the first quarter of 2002, followed by growth continuing into 2003.

SeniorCare Update

Cheryl provided a copy of the "Wisconsin SeniorCare fact sheet", (attachment X)

This fact sheet appears on the DHFS web site, and can be obtained by going to the DHFS web site, http://www.dhfs.state.wi.us/. The site has a link to all of the Medicaid programs and fact sheets, " Well Woman" is there also.

A web page devoted to SeniorCare is being developed so, currently, only the fact sheet is available. Over time more information will be added to both the web site and the fact sheet.

SeniorCare is to begin on September 1, 2002. BHCE staff and others in the Division of Health Care Financing will be working with organizations statewide to provide information, education and training for the program. A SeniorCare Advisory Committee has been formulated. Committee members include representation from the Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups (CWAG), AARP, and pharmacy association, State Medical Society, among others. Their first meeting will occur next week, and they will continue to meet and advise into the foreseeable future.

A central application processing center (CAPO) is being created for customer service, apaplication processing and enrollment. The hope is to use automation and technology to the extent possible. The CAPO will answer all questions related to SeniorCare. The only local agency component is that if a client is interested in other programs of assistance, CAPO staff will refer the individual to their local agency.

The Bureau of Health Care Eligibility (BHCE) is also creating an 800 number for SeniorCare. The 800 number is not yet live, but scripts are being developed and should be completed in the next several weeks. The 800 number and scripts will be publicized on the web.

Ed suggested a Legislative Hot Line to keep legislators appraised of the program. John said a ".Gov" link will be found at the web site.

BHCE staff are currently working on a Medicaid waiver for the SeniorCare Program and communicating with their federal over-site agency CMS. They feel they're making good progress and this is key to the process.

Random Moment Sample (RMS)

Kipp Sonnentag, Controller, DWD/ASD/Finance, and Becky Craig, DWD/ASD/ Project lead, spoke next. Wisconsin is one of the last states to adopt the RMS approach. Our Federal over-site agency has said they will not continue to approve 100% time reporting, and, from a fiscal standpoint, this is a housekeeping issue.

RMS Project development -

August 2001 - an initial meeting was held with Maximus. (Maximus was awarded this contract through an RFP. They have a lot of RMS experience in other states.)

September - Eric Baker, Administrator for the Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS), sent a memo to all local agencies advising them of this cost reporting change.

October - a meeting was held with WCHSA. Additional members were added to the advisory workgroup. In October a joint meeting was held with Maximus and the RMS workgroup (the workgroup has 49 members).

November – Representatives from the State of Minnesota shared their RMS experiences with Wisconsin, they've been using RMS for ten years or more so, have vast experience in its use.

December – on the 17th a meeting was held to discuss what RMS means, what is involved in its approach to time study. From this another meeting evolved to discuss ideas, concerns, local provider impacts, and to discuss the contracting structure. If Agencies are adversely affected, how should contracts be revised to minimize the affect.

Maximus was asked to develop a pilot proposal. The decision was to implement that proposal for a Quarter. The quarter in which this will occur is April/May/June 2002. Maximus is looking at a software package that will collect data. It is a stand alone, PC package used by North Carolina, and several other states. The package generates an "Excel" spreadsheet and applies the RMS results to create the dollars.

Maximus will contact the selected Agencies and they will be trained on the RMS process in March.

Maximus will sample by – phone or internet. Finalizing an internet process by April appears unlikely, so phone contact will likely be the method for communicating. However, an internet process in the future is highly feasible, just not for this quarter. Internet access is not an issue, at lease at this point, because 5 – 10% of RMS have to be a face-to-face.

Samples are entered into a "pool", a valid sample size is 2000, these are then pulled together to create costs for allocation. The data will then be compared to what actually happened within that quarter to determine if the results are similar to what was calculated in previous years. Minnesota found a 1 – 2% variance from their previous periods.

Everyone involved in this project is aware of the potential for Agency funding issues. If there is an adverse affect, DWD will go to the legislature to re-structure the contracts and reduce the impact on local providers. If there is a shift in costs, the contracts must reflect.

Q. Will a software package replace the current fiscal reporting system called Community Aids Reporting System (CARS)?

A. Yes, but it has costs associated with it. DHFS has been represented at all of the RMS meetings. The point people for DHFS have been – Sally Acuff, John Tuohy and Dave Corbett.

Q. When will this software change happen?

A. January 2003 or following, it will have to be on a calendar year to follow the contractual period. It's difficult to project a begin date at this time; large number of issues will have to be decided before this change can happen.

Both Kipp and Becky agreed to come back at a future IMAC meeting. Both suggested next June/July as being best, they'll have had the experience of a reporting quarter and can bring us data.

Child Care Monitoring

Dave Edie and Alan Sweet were next on our agenda. Alan had a handout detailing annual data for Child Care from the prior year, 2001. (See attachment X)

Dave asked everyone to look at the summary handout. He pointed out that it demonstrated the dramatic increase in child care subsidies between calendar years 2000 and 2001. Current expenditures look close to budget levels so far in SFY 2002, and there is a potential for expenditures to exceed budgeted levels in both SFY 2002 and SFY 2003.

The second section of the handout compares Milwaukee and the balance of the State in 2001. Milwaukee has fewer providers, but higher payments. There continue to be no waiting lists for child care subsidies.

Wisconsin has 77% of its children in licensed care.

There are several monthly EOS reports to track county/tribe specific data.

The Office of Child Care tries to keep their Regional Office requests at a minimum. However State staff will email the Regions when they note an appearance of provider non-compliance. Regional staff then work with local agency staff on appropriate follow-up actions. The local county/tribal staff may know the issues surrounding that provider, or may need to do a site visit. There may not be compliance issues. An example: the report indicates too many children are being cared for by the provider. The provider may actually be at an acceptable level because they are caring for several children on a part-time basis. Alan pointed out that some providers are breaking the law and children's safety is the issue, not just an overpayment issue.

An Operations Memo will come out in February and training is scheduled for April/May of 2002. This training will provide some assistance with best practices and to remind or alert agencies about the tools available for monitoring the Child Care Program.

Alan then updated us on a number of potential methods for lessening our use of paper. There is some thought to making greater use of Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). This could be accomplished by encouraging providers to sign up for EFT thus reducing the chances for lost and/or damaged checks. The Office of Child Care is planning to launch a major effort to move more providers to EFT.

A web based functionality is currently in development, with a March 2002 timeline. This web based functionality, on-line attendance reporting by providers, is part of the statewide child care provider file which will eventually contain data on all regulated providers in the state. Adding certification functionality and data is the next major phase, to be followed by an interface with the DHFS licensing system.

Under the new web attendance system, providers will enter hours of attendance on a bi-weekly basis. Actual hours, regardless of the number authorized, would be entered but additional hours would not be paid without agency intervention approving an override. The Office of Child Care expects local agencies to continue monitoring attendance. An agency can elect to become a "confirmation agency" which means that a local staff person would need to review and approve all provider-entered attendance hours before payments can be issued. If confirmation is not elected, then an agency would

be expected to review attendance either before or after the provider has entered the data and any follow-up actions would be taken. The Office of Child Care anticipates some savings will be realized at the local agency workload level, in addition to improved timeliness of payments and better customer service.

Food Stamp Program – transfer to DHFS

The goals of the transfer remain the same. Recent discussions have centered around the issue of timing.   However, there have been no decisions regarding the possibility of delaying the transfer. Work on development of the plan to be submitted to DOA by March 1 is resuming.

Coordination of Workgroups

On February 27th all W-2 and IM Agencies are invited to attend a symposium. Issues and resolutions which will include their meshing with the currently identified Workgroups. John Rathman thought perhaps a process to have front-line staff identify issues and create a format that would inter-face with the current workgroups. Then we could get a handle on what is being addressed and move forward with changes that would hopefully simplify and reduce local workloads.

Cheryl inquired if from this symposium there might be a listing or identification of -

*   Prioritized list of ideas to pursue
*   Workgroups to whom they could be assigned

Ed said the TAC workgroup will need a special morning session to collectively discuss the identified issues, and then a month or so to compile the material. A document should be ready to present to the full IMAC by March or April.

CARES Updates

Jill Jokela had a handout (See Attachment X). Her handout covered – Work Programs, SSI eligibility, COLA update. Jill asked if there were any comments or questions.

Jackie Bennett commented that her agency had received a lot of alerts. She called the Call Center but had not as yet received any feedback.

There are known problems with DXSX and those alerts, for the time being, should be ignored.

Deloitte has done some up-front testing and made decisions based on that. The results of their enhancements have been faster response time and fewer problems.

There has been expanded food stamp extract reporting. An enhanced food stamp extract will allow us to obtain a history of an individual's demographics for historical comparisons. This will lay a foundation for the next wave of food stamp warehouse data.

Case distribution actually looks the same as in January 2001. There have been increases for Medicaid, food stamps and Child Care but they appear to be proportionate –

Entitlement Programs:	Employment Programs
53.88% - MA only (NH/Institutions)	.03% - W-2 only
11.6 % - FS Only	.69% -
18.89% - FS/MA	.01% - W2/CC
	13.81% - W2 & ???

Joan Faber asked about the CARES work plan? It use to be regularly handed out at IMAC and isn't any longer. Time Hineline stopped creating the document as he was told it was no longer wanted. He can and will begin creating it again if that's the wish of this workgroup.

CARES initiatives in the next several months show MAPP/CTS automation in CARES, followed by the SSI updates automation. A fix to the "272" code, as it relates to time limited benefits, will not occur for a while – SeniorCare is next.

Where is the FS fix for review dates, was the question. *Note: the answer was provided after the IMAC meeting.* There are five PCRs related to the main problems associated with FS Review Dates. These PCRs are scheduled to be completed on 4/19/02.

IMAC member asked if there is a plan to change the current SSA platform, which, for many local agencies, is the connection to CARES/KIDS?

Jill responded that SSA is the gateway for approximately 80% of the agencies and is a very big issue. Each agency is different, but discussions relating to changing this platform must be shared with local agencies. There is a web site, for DWD, available to local agency IS people to identify what IT standards must be met. However, Jill will carry this concern forward to Tech Support and ask what they recommend. She will also see if they can write something up or do a presentation to IMAC.

Customer Service Plan – feedback on process

Kevin Huggins handed out Administrator's Memo 99-12, which references the Customer Service Plan, and a copy of the contract language in 4.2.1 as a starting point for this discussion.

Kevin pointed out that the Department doesn't want to make this complicated. The performance standards should, at a minimum, address –

- Timely handling of applications;
- Timely deadlines for scheduling interviews for customers;
- Actively assisting customers in securing the necessary eligibility determination information if request to do so;
- Timely providing food stamp and Medicaid benefits, W-2 employment positions, or paternity establishment; and,
- Actively including the customer in creating a plan that will lead the to self-sufficiency.

 It's not necessary to do a survey of clients. Feedback may be gathered by a focus group, reviewing complaints, or letters which complimented the worker and the service provided to the client/s.

The Department deliberately did not dictate a format or timeframes to allow agencies latitude. Agencies should contact their Regional AAs to clarify any questions and, if needed, negotiate areas open to interpretation. The first report is due at the end of January 2002.

USDA-FNS Data Collection

Several months ago FNS Regional office, during a conference call, indicated their interest in raising the priority of claim creation and collection. Our response was that it is a good idea but we have other priorities. They responded that we could assist them by collecting some local agency data. The attachment (attachment X) is what we received.

The conclusion of IMAC was that we needed clear definitions of the questions.   Once the questions are clarified we can, with Nancy Buckwalter's approval, run these through the Regional Offices.

Printing Applications

Several Agencies explored the cost of printing the five applications previously ordered through Vilar Arts. The conclusion was that they can be printed at less cost locally.

The IMAC recommendation is that an Administrator's Memo be sent to all of the local agencies explaining the decision to provide these applications on-line. It should also be explained that these forms have always been paid for by the Agency and local printing is more cost effective.

Contact for Security Issues

Tom Meier, Security Officer, has retired from State services. For the time being Tim Hineline will be the contact for Security issues.

Next meeting:

Date: February 21, 2002
Location: GEF III, ROOM 041